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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/445,043	03/20/2000	IAN BAIRD-SMITH	350013-65	9395
34205	7590	08/24/2005	EXAMINER	
OPPENHEIMER WOLFF & DONNELLY LLP 45 SOUTH SEVENTH STREET, SUITE 3300 MINNEAPOLIS, MN 55402			HYLTON, ROBIN ANNETTE	
			ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
			3727	

DATE MAILED: 08/24/2005

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

09/445,043

Applicant(s)

BAIRD-SMITH ET AL.

Examiner

Robin A. Hylton

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 06 June 2005.
- 2a) ☒ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☐ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1,3,4,6,8-11,13-18 and 22 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) 14-18 and 22 is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1,3,4,6,8-11 and 13 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on 20 March 2000 is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☒ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) ☐ Other: _____

DETAILED ACTION

Drawings

1. The drawings are objected to under 37 CFR 1.83(a). The drawings must show every feature of the invention specified in the claims. Therefore, the laminar member of the closure in addition to the annular sealing ring must be shown or the feature(s) canceled from the claim(s). No new matter should be entered.

Corrected drawing sheets in compliance with 37 CFR 1.121(d) are required in reply to the Office action to avoid abandonment of the application. Any amended replacement drawing sheet should include all of the figures appearing on the immediate prior version of the sheet, even if only one figure is being amended. The figure or figure number of an amended drawing should not be labeled as "amended." If a drawing figure is to be canceled, the appropriate figure must be removed from the replacement sheet, and where necessary, the remaining figures must be renumbered and appropriate changes made to the brief description of the several views of the drawings for consistency. Additional replacement sheets may be necessary to show the renumbering of the remaining figures. The replacement sheet(s) should be labeled "Replacement Sheet" in the page header (as per 37 CFR 1.84(c)) so as not to obstruct any portion of the drawing figures. If the changes are not accepted by the examiner, the applicant will be notified and informed of any required corrective action in the next Office action. The objection to the drawings will not be held in abeyance.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

2. The text of those sections of Title 35, U.S. Code not included in this action can be found in a prior Office action.
3. Claims 1,3,4,6,8,9, and 13 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Hiroshi (JP Application 06219464).

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Hiroshi teaches a can having a flexible member **3** adhesively secured to the can end, a rigid cap **5** having a laminar member and a skirt **7** extending downwardly from a peripheral edge thereof, and a deformable ring member **6** secured to the rigid cap (see fig. 8).

Hiroshi is silent regarding the spacing between the laminar member and the flexible membrane.

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to make the spacing between the laminar member and the flexible membrane less than the maximum possible extension of the deformable member towards the laminar member to prevent rupture of the flexible member due to excessive pressure within the closed can.

Wherein it is asserted pre-stressing occurs upon application of pressure to the membrane, the membrane of Hiroshi is pre-stressed.

Regarding claim 4, the outer portion **2** of the can comprising the screw threads has an upper edge that is considered to be a flange.

Regarding claim 9, Hiroshi teaches the claimed invention except for the flexible membrane being made of a metal foil. It would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to make the flexible membrane of metal foil, since it has been held to be within the general skill of a worker in the art to select a known material on the basis of its suitability for the intended use as a matter of obvious design choice.

Response to Arguments

4. Applicant's arguments filed June 6, 2005 have been fully considered but they are not persuasive.

Applicant argues the container assembly of Hiroshi is not intended to be used in the same manner, i.e., cooking food in-situ, as the inventive container assembly. While the prior art does not specifically say uncooked food can be placed in the container assembly and cooked, it

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does not eliminate the possibility either. Moreover, it is known that placing a food product into a heating or sterilization process can cause cooking of the food if left in that environment too long. The fact of matter is that the process of cooking food is not at issue since that is not the claimed subject matter. Only the structure of the container assembly is claimed.

In response to applicant's argument that the references fail to show certain features of applicant's invention, it is noted that the features upon which applicant relies (i.e., cooking of uncooked food in the container) are not recited in the rejected claim(s). Although the claims are interpreted in light of the specification, limitations from the specification are not read into the claims. See *In re Van Geuns*, 988 F.2d 1181, 26 USPQ2d 1057 (Fed. Cir. 1993).

Regarding applicant's statement there is no need for the sheet of Hiroshi to be flexible is inaccurate. First, the nature of the material inherently provides a flexible sheet. Secondly, the use of high-temperature and high-pressure in the sterilization process inherently creates pressure build-up with a sealed container assembly. Thus, the sheet must be flexible to compensate for this pressure build-up. The ventilation holes in the rigid cap are stated to be for further altering the state of the can contents in a separate step. Wherein the open phrase "comprising" is used in the claims, the presence of the ventilation hole in the rigid cap of Hiroshi is not precluded from existence.

The structure of Hiroshi as set forth herein renders the claims obvious and unpatentable.

Conclusion

5. **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL.** Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire THREE MONTHS from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within TWO MONTHS of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after

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the end of the THREE-MONTH shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the mailing date of this final action.

6. The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure. Various prior art closures teaching features similar to those disclosed and/or claimed are cited for their disclosures.

7. In order to reduce pendency and avoid potential delays, Group 3720 is encouraging FAXing of responses to Office Actions directly into the Group at (571) 273-8300. This practice may be used for filing papers not requiring a fee. It may also be used for filing papers which require a fee by applicants who authorize charges to a PTO deposit account. Please identify the examiner and art unit at the top of your cover sheet. Papers submitted via FAX into Group 3720 will be promptly forwarded to the examiner.

8. It is called to applicant's attention that if a communication is faxed before the reply time has expired, applicant may submit the reply with a "Certificate of Facsimile" which merely asserts that the reply is being faxed on a given date. So faxed, before the period for reply has expired, the reply may be considered timely. A suggested format for a certificate follows:

I hereby certify that this correspondence for Application Serial No. _____ is being facsimiled to The U.S. Patent and Trademark Office via fax number 571-273-8300 on the date shown below:

Typed or printed name of person signing this certificate

Signature _____

Date _____

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9. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Robin Hylton whose telephone number is (571) 272-4540. The examiner can normally be reached Monday - Friday from 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. (Eastern time).

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Nathan Newhouse, can be reached on (571) 272-4544.

If in receiving this Office Action it is apparent to applicant that certain documents are missing, e.g., copies of references cited, form PTO-1449, form PTO-892, etc., requests for copies of such papers should be directed to Errica Miller at (571) 272-4370.

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

RAH
August 19, 2005



Robin A. Hylton
Primary Examiner
GAU 3727